



7TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

*U.S. ARMY 7th SPECIAL FORCES GROUP PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
EGLIN AFB, FL 32539 / (850) 885-7275*

Colonel Christopher N. Riga

GROUP COMMANDER

Colonel Christopher N. Riga was born in Westfield, Mass., on Oct. 23, 1964. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in August 1987 following graduation from Columbia University, and served as an infantryman in the 82nd Airborne Division. In September 1991, Col. Riga attended Officer Candidate School. He was commissioned as an Infantry Second Lieutenant in January 1992, and served as a Platoon Leader and Executive Officer in the 82nd Airborne Division and the 75th Ranger Regiment.

In 1998, Col. Riga graduated from the Special Forces Qualification Course and was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (A). He served as a Detachment Commander and Assistant S-3 from 1998 to 2002. Col. Riga then attended the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Ks.

After graduating from CGSC, Col. Riga returned to 3rd Special Forces Group (A). He served as the Bravo Company Commander and Operations Officer for 3rd Battalion from 2004 to 2006, and as the Group Operations Officer and CJSOTF Deputy J-3 from 2006 to 2007. Col. Riga was then assigned to the United States Army Special Operations Command where he served as the DCS G3 Executive Officer, and as the Assistant Chief of Staff.



From August 2009 to July 2011, Col. Riga served as the Battalion Commander, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (A). During that time, he served as the Special Operations Task Force-South Commander, Kandahar, Afghanistan, from September 2010 to April 2011.

Following command, Col. Riga served as the Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Army from July 2011 to June 2012. Most recently, Col. Riga graduated from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government as an Army War College Fellow.

Col. Riga has served in combat in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, multiple rotations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also served with the Multinational Force and Observers while assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, in Operation Safehaven while assigned to the Ranger Regiment, and Operation Joint Forge as a Detachment Commander.

Col. Riga's awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal for Valor with three oak leaf clusters, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal for Valor with four oak leaf clusters, and other achievement, service and foreign awards. He has earned the Combat Infantryman Badge (two awards), Expert Infantryman Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Ranger Tab and Special Forces Tab.